

AGENDA

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM TASK FORCE

September 28, 2004
7:00 - 10:00 p.m.
Government Center, Room 9/10

<u>Time</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Responsible Person</u>
7:03	Opening/Welcome	Chairman
7:10	Approval of Minutes of August 2	Members
7:15	Announcements/Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Hearing about Sanitary Districts Computer Recycling Collectors Meeting on Oct 7 	Members Jeff Smithberger Jeff Smithberger Jeff Smithberger
7:25	Review of Tour of Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photos and comments from attendees 	Members and Linda Boone
7:40	Next Steps for SWTF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review mission and objectives Timeline for Report Completion Role of communications Introduce Group Decision Support Center facilitator Overview of GDSC 	Colin Waitt, Facilitator J.R. Holt J.R. Holt
8:00	Articulate the mission and objectives statement	Members and Facilitator
8:40	Break	
8:50	Review Environmental Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information from staff Decision about paper vs. plastic 	Facilitator and Members Jeff Smithberger Members
9:25	Discussion of Report Format	Linda Boone
9:30	Summary of Meeting	Chairman and Facilitator
9:45	Next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collectors Meeting on October 7 Research Customer Service Issues 	Members Volunteers
10:00	Adjourn	Chairman

Next meeting – October 26, 2004 at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM TASK FORCE
September 28, 2004, 7:00 - 10:00 p.m.
Government Center, Room 9/10

Attendees: Robin Smyers, Queenie Cox, Joyce Doughty, Joyce Bissonette, Bill Lecos, Joan Carr, Conrad Mehan, Paul Liberty, Clark Tyler, John Hasle, Jim Langemeier, Peter Crane

Members Absent: John Townes, Joann McCoy, Marilyn Blois, Sheila Roit

Staff: Jeff Smithberger, Marilyn McHugh, Pamela Gratton and Linda Boone

LMI: Colin Waitt and Dan Jackson

J.R. Holt

Guest: Pat Sanborn

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:05, when a quorum was present.

The Minutes of the August 2 meeting were approved as presented.

Announcements/Updates

Tour. Members of the Task Force thanked County staff for the tour of recycling and disposal facilities on September 1.

Tornado Debris Cleanup. Approximately 200 tons of debris were collected on the last 2 weekends following the tornado that touched down in the Pleasant Valley community. Most debris consisted of tree material. The County Executive had authorized County staff to collect and dispose of the storm debris in that area.

Sanitary Districts. A Public Hearing has been announced for October 18, at 5:00 p.m. to discuss adding 52 new customers to Sanitary Districts. Anyone interested can attend or testify. Collection companies in the area have been notified by letter and all collection companies received the information in the monthly newsletter. The question was raised as to whether County staff could notify the collection companies when petition information is sent to communities. That is not practical since the information is available to communities on the website and the County may never learn of a petition process until the package is received from the community. However as promised, County staff will notify collection companies when completed petitions are received as well as the date for the Public Hearing.

Computer Recycling. During the E-cycling event on September 18, County staff and volunteers collected about 72,000 pounds of computers and electronics from over 500 patrons. The great success of the event was due to the location and adequate advertising; residents were able to plan ahead for it. It was suggested that the County survey participants at future events to see where they originate and perhaps schedule events where there have not been events in the past. County staff needs to also check how participants heard about the events in order to target advertising. Finally, it was suggested that we may want to plan these events to coincide with community events that are scheduled throughout the year, e.g. Mason Park celebration, Centreville Day, etc.

Hazardous waste collection. The final in a series of 3 events will be held in the Transfer Station parking lot on October 6 for small quantity generators. It was suggested the Chamber of Commerce could help publicize this and other events that help businesses. Bill Lecos will get information in the local chambers of commerce.

Collectors Meeting on October 7. The next collectors' meeting is scheduled for October 7. Task Force members are invited to attend. It will be held in Suite 448 of the Government Center at 5:00 p.m. One of the topics on the agenda is asking the collectors to participate with the Task Force in addressing customer service and operational issues. John Hasle and others agreed to encourage their fellow collectors to attend the meeting. Phone numbers and addresses of all the permitted collection companies are on the County's website.

Tour of Facilities

Linda and other members of the Task Force reviewed the photos taken during the tour and commented on the information learned. The tour and text is located on the website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/swtf and select the tour option.

Next Steps for SWTF

Mission and objectives. Colin provided a recap of the mission and objectives defined by the Task Force to date. The handout cites objectives such as: work together to develop a comprehensive report, enhance relationships between haulers, address concerns raised in the SWMP, ensure local communities are kept abreast of and involved in the task force process, ensure that the small business point of view is represented, identify mutually beneficial resolution of issues, advocate for expansion of all types of recycling, see that issues are resolved in the best interest of the community, to reach viable consensus on issues, consideration of a broad perspective of ideas, ensure that the SWMP contains 20 years of good ideas.

Group editing of the Task Force report will be an important part of the process. The editing will take more time than originally scheduled.

Timeline for Report Completion. To ensure the Task Force has time to focus on the report and edit the various sections, a new timeline was proposed: Customer service would be addressed during the October meeting and Operational issues discussed during the November meeting. A new process would be used to accomplish the modified timeline. The Group Decision Support Center (GDSC) technology will enhance the Task Force meeting its new timeline. A brief discussion of the GDSC technology was followed.

New facilitator. J.R. Holt was introduced as the new facilitator who would help the Task Force maximize its time at the GDSC. She explained that the software used in the GDSC allows anonymous and simultaneous participation by everyone. It facilitates decision making because discussion time centers on items of disagreement rather than discussing everything. Brainstorming, categorizing, ranking, and voting can be accomplished electronically. Reports are generated for each session.

There were no objections from the Task Force to moving to the GDSC for at least the next 2 meetings. The GDSC is located in the Pennino Building across from the Government Center. Instructions and directions will be sent with the agenda for the next meeting.

Role of communications. Communications is so critical to the 3 categories of issues already identified by the Task Force, that we may want to designate a category just for communications. Communication underpins and supports many of the issues already prioritized and categorized.

Articulate the mission and objectives statement

Colin asked members about their vision for residential solid waste collection during the next 20 years. The objectives will set the tone and define the perspective of future discussions. Good communications will underlie the recommendations presented in the report. Are we recommending the wrong thing for the right reasons or vice versa? The Task Force Members individually identified the following perspectives at a strategic level and the facilitator grouped by similar themes:

- Regulation
 - Less regulation since it is costly, especially to small companies
 - Regulatory environment where residents use containers that are provided
 - Definition of county's role in collection articulated by regulation, enforcement or whether the County should be in the collection business at all
 - County should be out of the collection business
 - Community making decision about how trash is collected.
- Education
 - Education of residents about issues that is strong and in appropriate languages
 - More unified approach to facilitate education and information
 - Communication and education important for future
- Communication
- General
 - Fully automated collection
 - Zone pickup to allow reduction of traffic and to be more efficient
 - 50% diversion or recycling rate-waste reduction or diversion
 - Enforcement of business recycling
 - Expand the E/RRF (double its size)
 - Yard waste/brush collection that is marketed as an additional subservice and not included in basic trash service; could be offered by other private companies
 - HOAs need to be considered in future
 - Shift in the waste stream that will move toward more business collection and less residential waste
 - Put yard waste back into regular waste stream
 - Negative incentive for collection of yard waste so that homeowners will keep waste at home
- Competition
 - Market driven solid waste system where competition and good service maximizes benefits and minimizes environmental impact
 - Need to ensure competition among private collection companies
 - Customer service issues and competition ebb and flow. Consolidation of businesses happen. Preserving competition is sometimes difficult and not always desirable. Specialized services to fill niches may be the new model for residential collection. Some areas of the county do not have as much competition as others.
 - Free market and competition drive service levels

The aim of this session was to identify the high level strategic objectives that Task Force members saw as important over the next 20 years. Good communication was seen as underpinning both good customer service and effective operations. It was suggested that County staff should develop a comprehensive statement about how to recycle correctly and let the collection companies distribute it to their customers so that everyone in the County has the same understanding of the need to recycle correctly. Consumers need to give feedback to us about solid waste matters also. Communications is a 2-way street. Multi-level and repetitive communications are needed to be successful.

Also other high level objectives noted were the County's future role in waste collection, competition and regulatory issues (County Code Chapter 109). These high level perspectives underpin all the three issues categories (environmental, customer service and operational).

Review Environmental Issues

Colin reviewed the Environmental issues with the Task Force that were discussed during the August 2 meeting and the recommendations that will be part of the final report

Low emission fuels. County staff continues to research the possibility of allowing private companies to use County fueling locations. There are legal concerns about that since Virginia is a Dillon rule state. The County Attorney is reviewing the law currently. The Chamber of Commerce could help with enabling legislation if needed.

Trash generated by homeowner or generated by other contractors. After discussion of this topic, no further recommendation was forthcoming from the Task Force, private collection companies should decide how much material they collect in order to serve their customers.

Decision about paper bags vs. plastic bags in yard waste. Jeff provided an excerpted handout and chart describing how other jurisdictions have implemented paper bag collection for leaves and yard waste. The complete document will be added to the Task Force webpage. When plastic bags are allowed to be used, lots of plastic is mixed into the leaves and brush causing less materials to be recycled. The reason that most jurisdictions began composting yard waste is because the state or jurisdiction banned yard waste from landfill. Now composting facilities want to ban plastic bags.

Some jurisdictions in the area have already banned plastic bags for the collection of yard waste. Either paper bags or cans without any bags are allowed. There are mixed reactions from customers and jurisdictions about paper versus plastic bags-some like it, others do not. The amount of rejected material (overs) at the composting facility is reduced with paper bags. Most jurisdictions that staff studied who banned plastic bags in yard waste, moved to paper bags many years ago. There are environmental benefits to using paper, but some members expressed concern that residents would balk at the proposition of banning plastic bags.

Does the County have a position on whether to move to paper bags for collection of yard waste? County staff want to work with the Task Force in doing it, if that is the Task Force's recommendation. A question was asked about how the Prince William compost facility handles the problems of the overs. In Prince William County, the overs go straight to their landfill. Loudoun County does not collect yard waste in plastic. Almost 90% of the yard waste composted at Loudoun Composting is from Fairfax County. If recycling of yard waste continues to increase and if neighboring jurisdictions continue to move to paper bags, we may be forced to or not be able to dispose of our yard waste at a composting site-- the composting facilities could cut us off.

Aren't the paper bags smaller? No. Are containers a viable alternative to paper or plastic bags? Containers are heavy, hard to keep brush in a container.

The strong recommendation of the Task Force is to develop an education campaign directed to encourage citizens to use paper bags for yard waste so that more of the material can be recycled. This will have an effect on some of the residents and we will evaluate if more stringent restrictions are needed in the years to come.

Discussion of Report Format

Linda asked members to look at the draft report format and to offer any suggestions for changes. County staff are beginning to write the draft report.

Summary of Meeting

Sanitary district public hearing is upcoming on October 18.

The Task Force wants to engage haulers at their meeting on October 7 at 5:00 p.m.

GDSC is a tactical change that is OK with the Task Force for the next few meetings.

Environmental issues are identified and ready to add to the report .

Customer Service issues will be discussed on October 26.

Operational issues will be discussed on November 30, the revised date for the November monthly meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Next meeting – October 26, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. in the Group Decision Support Center, Pennino Building, 3rd Floor